



DHS Today via E-Mail

April 9, 2004

Life on Impact

Lea stood outside of the emergency room door, clutching her daughters' hello kitty backpack hoping the Doctor would soon appear with good news. The lights flickered overhead and Lea was showered with thoughts from the previous day. How did this happen? Just through the double doors, doctors and nurses huddled over a limp seemingly lifeless small body wielding the latest tools in medical technology. What had she done? As memories poured over her, Lea remembered the day little Emma was born in that same hospital just three years ago. What a proud day for Lea. Although news of the pregnancy halted the relationship with Lea's boyfriend, she really looked forward to motherhood. And since Lea's childhood had been marked by abuse, she vowed her child would always feel safe and sound. The first few months were difficult. Emma was in and out of the hospital several times and Lea's factory job kept her feet and back in chronic pain. Soon the bills began to pile up and the phone rang incessantly from threatening debt collectors. Between the fatigue of her job and the demands of a sick child, the dream Lea had shared for her family was crumbling. Yesterday things seemed to peak. Emma was sent home early from pre-school with a fever and Lea was fired for missing too many days at the factory. On the drive home, Emma wailed and whined so much that Lea's ears began to ring. If she could just get home and get Emma to bed, she could think! As Lea pulled into the driveway she immediately noticed the mailbox brimming with shut off notices. The pressure in Lea's head began to bear down. When Lea leaned down to unstrap Emma from her car seat the child grabbed her hair and screamed into her ear. Without a thought, Lea began hitting and shaking Emma with all her might. With every blow Lea cursed her life, her job, her struggling finances and her family for not supporting her. Lea screamed even louder than her daughter from the pain. When she stepped back, she noticed the child wasn't moving. Lea panicked and began to

hyperventilate. She dumped her purse on the ground frantically searching for the cell phone to dial 911. After that, everything seemed to play out in slow motion.

Lea's story is not real but there are thousands of "Leas" in Arkansas. Parents struggle to keep it together but the children often pay the ultimate price. Child abuse is preventable in some cases, by simply reaching out to those in desperate need of support. April is Child Abuse Prevention Month. Throughout the month local county offices are working in their community to ensure the safety of Arkansas' smallest citizens, and they need your help. Reach out and let those around you know that help is available and they don't have to do it alone. For more information about resources in your community, contact your local DHS office.

DHS AROUND THE STATE

Donaghey Plaza Complex Arts Committee



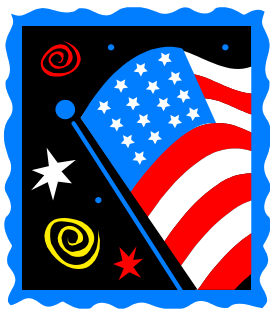
Spring is in the air and art is everywhere!

The DHS Donaghey Plaza Arts Committee is comprised of a group of employees that seek to enhance our work experience by presenting displays of various art forms to provide enjoyment as well as to inspire, educate and challenge us all. Exhibits currently on display in the Donaghey Plaza South and West Buildings are photography by Kirk Jordan, watercolors by members of the MidSouth Watercolorists Association, and coming soon is an exhibit of

the artwork of Thea Leopoulus (THEA Foundation). The THEA Foundation exhibit will include a hand-painted portrait of Blues Entertainer B.B King; this portrait will also be displayed at the Clinton Library. Committee members are: Ingrid Green, Michele Rodgers, Barry Rowland, Catherine Holloway, Pat Branton, Sandra Jackson, Cindy Waller, Kandy Cayce, Kathleen Wingo, Basil Gray, Lucie Stoddard, Cindy Young, Robin Wingard, Jim Williams, Margaret Bates, Kami Trammell, and Pam Lambert. Please feel free to contact any of these individuals if you have ideas about future exhibits.

American Legion Department of Arkansas

A World War II Commemoration Ceremony honoring ALL World War II Veterans will be held at 12:30 p.m. at War Memorial Stadium (east side), Saturday, May 15, 2004 to commemorate the military service of all Arkansas World War II Veterans. American Legion Post #1, in



cooperation with the Arkansas Veteran's Coalition and participating Boy Scouts will be hosting the event. On May 29, 2004 (Memorial Day Weekend) – the United States will dedicate the National WWII Memorial in Washington, D.C., honoring the 16 million American servicemen and servicewomen who served and fought to secure democracy, preserve freedom, liberate the oppressed, and rid the world of the scourge of tyranny. Since many WWII Veterans will not be able to make the trip to Washington, the American Legion Post #1 in Little Rock is honoring local Arkansas WWII Veterans with a ceremony at the ceremony at War Memorial on May 15th. Please feel free to contact the American Legion of Arkansas if you have further questions about the project or you may contact Bo Winchell at (501) 375-1104.

The **Arkadelphia Human Development Center** was privileged to host a luncheon and tour on February 13th for the Arkansas State Elks Association and their National President, the Grand Exalted Ruler Amos A. McCallum. Over the past twenty years the Arkansas Elks have donated in excess of \$500,000 to the six Human Development Centers for the purchase of furniture, fixtures, equipment and supplies for use in recreational and extra curricular activities for the people served at the center. The six centers are located in: Arkadelphia, Alexander, Booneville, Conway, Jonesboro, and Warren, Arkansas.

JOB CLUB WORKSHOP HELD IN LOCAL DHS OFFICE

The **Independence County Department of Human Services** recently held a one day Job Club Workshop for clients who receive TEA (Transitional Employment Assistance). The workshop was held in the local office at 100 Weaver Ave. This purpose of this job club was to help clients in their pursuit of full time employment by instructing them in the areas of job search, resumes, interviewing techniques, job retention and budgeting. In order for the clients to be successful in these areas, local companies donated goods and services such as haircuts, oil changes, free dinners and toiletries to be distributed to the clients. A “goody bag” was made for each client and door prizes were given throughout the day. Pizza was served for lunch and was provided by local restaurants. County Administrator, Robert Reynolds, stated, “I am delighted with the positive results of the day long Job Club. It was evident based on my observations and the comments I heard from participants, that the TEA staff spent a great deal of time and energy planning a truly successful workshop designed to improve the employability of clients served by the Independence County Office”. The purpose of the TEA program is to help economically needy families become more responsible for their own support and less dependent on public assistance. Through employability assessments, employment planning, and the provision of employment related services, the TEA program helps recipients recognize their employment possibilities and helps direct them into jobs as soon as possible.

New AASI S Board Payment Process

Beginning with April supplementals, direct payment for Foster Care Board supplements will be generated through AASI S. There will no longer be a need to separate remittance cards, create mailing labels, stuff envelopes, or apply postage to be mailed to the resources. This new system creates a more seamless, streamlined way to distribute board payments.

Payroll, Benefits, and Personnel Training

The Office of Finance and Administration is conducting training for employees from the DHS Human Development Centers that will enable them to process on-site payroll and personnel functions. Training began on March 29th and will continue until April 30th. Once training is completed, HDC employees will be able to initiate basic functions for payroll, benefits, and personnel actions required for hiring new employees.



COMMUNITY CALENDAR

April - Child Abuse Prevention Month

April 19-24 - National Volunteer Week

April 30th - The Qualities of A Leader Workshop, The Church at Rock Creek, Live Simulcast, for information call 225-8654

May - Foster Care Month

May - Older Americans Month

May 6th & 7th - Southeast Arkansas Human Development Center 8th Annual Open Horizons Conference

June 5th - Open 4D Jackpot Barrel Race, Saline County Fairgrounds, Benton - sponsored by the Arkadelphia Human Development Center Volunteer Council; for information call Shenna Shuler (870)246-8011

A Final Thought...

Mrs. Patricia Lawrence attended the Adoption Coalition Meeting (DCFS) on March 18th in Wynne, Arkansas. The coalition is a collective group of citizens that recruit qualified adoptive families for foster children in the state of Arkansas. Following is a response from Mrs. Lawrence regarding her experience with the coalition:

“I would like to take the time to tell you all that my husband and I enjoyed the meeting at Wynne tremendously. We have never been to a coalition meeting that we have enjoyed more. Everyone had such wonderful things to say. I came home and shared some things with my oldest daughter, Latisha. She, along with myself, is looking forward to the next coalition meeting. Our family knows of many people associated with the church and in surrounding towns who would love to become involved foster care and adoptions. I believe that if we can maintain the atmosphere that we experienced in the March 18th meeting, we will go a long way in our endeavor to find special families for special children. We cannot give up on our children in Arkansas. There is a family out there somewhere for each and every one of them. We have adopted seven children and we still have open arms and an open home for more. Please keep up the good work. Thank you so much for allowing my family to be a part of this great cause.”



Do you have something you'd like to share in the newsletter? Send e-mail to Julie.Munsell@mail.state.ar.us or Ingrid.Green@mail.state.ar.us. Send a fax to (501) 682-6836 or call (501) 682-8650.